

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-09 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 SS-14 NSC-10 L-03 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4515

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 0388

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN, PFOR, EI

SUBJ: CIVAIR - LANDING RIGHTS

REF: DUBLIN 0352

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR AND DCM HAD LENGHTY INTERVIEW ON LANDING RIGHTS QUESTION MARCH 22 WITH PETER BARRY, NEW IRISH MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND POWER AND WITH MR. D. O. RIORDAIN, PERSEC TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND POWER. WE PLAN NEXT WEEK TO MEET WITH FONMIN GARRET FITZGERALD AND HAVE FURTHER TALKS WITH TRANSPORT PERMSEC O RIORDAIN IN AN EFFORT TO GET A FORMAL RESPONSE TO OUR DIPLOMATIC NOTE OF MARCH 14.

1. DURING TWO- HOUR LUNCHEON MEETING YESTERDAY ON LANDING RIGHTS AMBASSADOR AND DCM LEARNED THAT TRANSPORT MINISTER BARRY HAD ONLY BEEN ADVISED WHICH MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIO HE WOULD GET SOME TWO HOURS BEFORE RECEIVING IT ON MARCH 14. HE THEREFORE COMES TO THE JOB WITHOUT ANY TRANSPORT BACKGROUND, AND HAS BEEN INNUNDATED OVER THE PAST WEEK WITH THE PROBLEM OF TRYING TO ACQUAINT HIMSELF WITH HIS NEW AND EXTENSIVE RESPONSIBILITIES. WE FOUND HIM TO BE FRIENDLY AND WILLING TO LISTEN BUT, NOT UNNATRUALLY, SOMEWHAT CONFUSED AND EXTREMELY CAUTIOUS.

2. WE THOROUGHLY VENTILATED THE SUBJECT, PRESSING ESPECIALLY THE NEED TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE IN TIME TO
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TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE 1973 TOURIST SEASON. WE POINTED OUT THAT FORMAL PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN OUR NOTE OF MARCH 14 WERE NOW BEFORE THE GOI AND WE WERE HOPING FOR AN EARLY AND FAVORABLE RESPONSE.

3. O RIODAIN -- WHO APPARENTLY HAD LITTLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS MATTER UNDER THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT-- SAID THAT, ASIDE FROM CONSIDERATIONS WHICH WERE UP TO THE CABINET ITSELF TO DECIDE AT A POLITICAL LEVEL, HE WAS OPPOSED TO ANY SETTLEMENT THAT WAS NOT FORMALLY INCORPORATED INTO THE EXISTING BILATERAL. HE SAID HE HAD REVIEWED THIS MATTER WITH HUGH MCCANN AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND HE REITERATED BASICALLY THE SAME POINTS THAT MCANN HAD MADE TO US ON THE 14 TH, REPORTED IN PARA 6 OF REFTEL. O RIODAIN ADDED A FURTHER POINT THAT, IN HIS OWN VIEW, LANGUAGE SHOULD ALSO BE WORKED INTO OUR EXCHANGE OF NOTES GUARANTEEING THAT THE USG WOULD NOT SEEK TO EXPAND U. S. ACCESS TO OR THROUGH DUBLIN FOR FIVE YEARS BEYOND WHAT WAS CONTAINED IN THE NEW AGREEMENT. HIS POINT WAS-- HE EXPLAINED AND BARRY AGREED-- THAT THE COSGRAVE GOVERNMENT, HAVING MADE A DEAL, SHOULD NOT BE FACED WITH THE QUESTION OF HAVING TO MAKE ANOTHER DEAL UNTIL AT LEAST AFTER ANOTHER ELECTION.

4. TO ALL THIS, WE RESPONDED WITH POINTS CONTAINED DEPT' S 42266. REGARDING O RIORDAIN' S FIVE- YEAR PROPOSAL, WE SAID WE WOULD, OF COURSE, REPORT IT TO WASHINGTON BUT THAT, IN OUR JUDGMENT, ANY NEW AGREEMENT THAT WAS ARRIVED AT COULD IN ANY EVENT BE EXPECTED TO BE FAIRLY STABLE OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS BECAUSE IT HAD TAKEN US 20 YEARS TO GET THIS FAR.

5. MINISTER BARRY NOTED THE COMPLEXITY WHICH THE ISSUE HAD FOR HIM AS A NEW MINISTER. HE SAID THAT HE WANTED TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE IN AN AMICABLE WASY BUT THAT HE WOULD NEED TIME TO STUDY IT. HE APPEARED UNCERTAIN AS TO WHAT THE NEXT STEPS WERE TO BE AND HOW THE MACHANISMS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD OPERATE TO COPE WITH IT. HE SAID THAT THE CABINET WOULD BE HOLDING URGENT CONSULTATIONS ON THE BRITISH WHITE PAPER (ON NORTHERN IRELAND) OVER THE NEXT WEEK OR TWO, AS WELL AS ON THE BUDGET AND OTHER URGENT MATTERS, AND THAT IT WAS TAKING AS MUCH AS A FORTNIGHT TO GET EVEN URGENT PROBLEMS ON THE CABINET AGENDA.
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6. WE OPINED THAT THE IMMINENCE OF THE TOURIST SEASON MADE THIS MATTER URGENT AND REQUESTED HIM TO TAKE THE QUESTION UP WITH HIS COLLEAGUES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WE ASKED THAT THE GOI RESPOND FORMALLY TO OUR NOTE OF MARCH 14 AND, TO EMPHASIZE OUR POINT, WE SAID THAT WE WOULD BE SEEKING APPOINTMENT WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE THIS MATTER FURTHER.

7. COMMENT: AFTER BEING IN OPPOSITION FOR 16 YEARS, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS CAREFULLY FEELING ITS WAY AS IT TAKES UP THE REINS OF POWER. NOT SURPRISINGLY ITS MEMBERS ARE CAUTIOUS, AND THEY ARE ALSO BESET WITH MAJOR NATIONAL ISSUES (THE PROPOSALS ON NORTHERN IRELAND CONTAINED IN THE BRITISH WHITE PAPER) WHICH WILL SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT THE FUTURE OF THEIR COUNTRY. ON THE OTHER HAND, OVER WEEKEND THE AMBASSADOR SAW PRIME MINISTER COSGRAVE WHO VOLUNTEERED THAT HE INTENDED TO TURN TO THE LANDING RIGHTS QUESTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE; FURTHERMORE, WE HAVE, AS WE TOLD BARRY WE WERE GOING TO DO, FOLLOWED UP OUR MEETING YESTERDAY WITH A REQUEST FOR A MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER, GARRET FITZGERALD. FINALLY, BEFORE TERMINATING OUR MEETING YESTERDAY, MINISTER BARRY REQUESTED PERMSEC O RIORDAIN TO LIAISE WITH DCM SORENSON, WHO PLANS TO SEEK FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH O RIODAIN NEXT WEEK. OUR AIM IS TO SEE WHETHER A RESPONSE TO OUR DIPLOMATIC NOTE CANNOT BE JARRED LOOSE. MOORE

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